

Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization

**North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative
Project Evaluation**

November 2000 – March 2002

A CONSORTIUM PROJECT OF: Augsburg College; College of St. Catherine; Hamline University; Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs; Macalester College; Metropolitan State University; Minneapolis Community College; Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program; University of Minnesota (Center for Urban and Regional Affairs; Children, Youth and Family Consortium; Minnesota Extension Service); University of St. Thomas; and Minneapolis community and neighborhood representatives.

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**Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
University of Minnesota
330 Humphrey Center**

North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative Project Evaluation

November 2000 – March 2002

Conducted on behalf of
North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative

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Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization

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INTRODUCTION

The North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative (NMSEAI) is a collaboration of four partnering organizations: the Cleveland Neighborhood Association, the Jordan Area Community Council, the Hawthorne Area Community Council, and the Southeast Asian Community Council. The goals of NMSEAI are to:

- 1) Build partnerships between Southeast Asian residents and the wider community to successfully work on mutual concerns;
- 2) Create a greater sense of community among all the people of the Jordan, Cleveland, and Hawthorne neighborhoods;
- 3) Provide helpful information to Southeast Asian residents;
- 4) Educate institutions and organizations about the special needs and concerns of Southeast Asians;

To date, NMSEAI has accomplished many things. Among other things, NMSEAI has completed a survey of over 100 Southeast Asian residents to establish the needs and issues that face them, organized those needs and issues into four broad subject areas, acquired funding, hired a community organizer, presented on three of the four broad topics of interest, had a community celebration, and conducted two personal Crime and Safety workshops.

The Initiative has organized three informational forums on schools, housing and crime/safety attended by over 250 people. In addition the Initiative has organized a series of crime and safety-related seminars on topics such as 911, civil rights, animal control, and domestic abuse. Between 30 and 50 people participated in each of these seminars.

Identified stakeholders are given below along with specific ways in which evaluation findings will be utilized:

1. **The working group of NMSEAI, consisting of representatives from the 4 partnering agencies;**
 - To analyze the project process, activities, and outcomes
 - To develop a strategic plan for the future direction of NMSEAI.
2. **Other neighborhood groups (doing similar work with similar populations);**
 - To understand NMSEAI's history, activities and accomplishments
 - To learn about NMSEAI's model of activism.
3. **Funders of neighborhood organizing;**
 - To learn about the progress and achievements of NMSEAI
 - To learn about some of the unique challenges and accomplishments of community organizing with the Hmong community
 - As a case study of how to evaluate local, grassroots efforts targeting minority, immigrant/refugee populations.
4. **The Hmong community in North Minneapolis;**

- To provide on-going knowledge of available resources working in their neighborhoods
- To facilitate discussion on defining community and community building.

The components making up the evaluation report include:

- Methodology Section** – This section details how the evaluation was conducted; the underlying assumptions that were made, and the limitations to the study.
- Program Context** – This section describes where NMSEAI exists and the population targeted.
- The Program History** – This section outlines the evolution of NMSEAI detailing how and why NMSEAI originated and describing the nature of the collaboration.
- Program Theory of Action** – This section answers the question, “How does NMSEAI envision its work?”
- Program Description and Projects** - This section describes NMSEAI’s programs and activities.
- Strengths/Weaknesses Analysis** – This section gauges the progress of NMSEAI in accomplishing its four stated goals and details how many people NMSEAI has served, what some of the project outcomes are and how these outcomes relate to the goals NMSEAI originally set for itself.
- Recommendations** – This section gives specific recommendations regarding how NMSEAI could proceed including other strategies that could be employed to increase NMSEAI’s effectiveness and what current, effective strategies should remain a part of the process.

METHODOLOGY

Evaluation participants were classified into the following groups:

- Those actively involved in the planning and implementation of NMSEAI goals—**“NMSEAI working group”**
- Those less or not actively involved in the planning and implementation, but contributed to NMSEAI either indirectly or specifically by presenting at a forum—**“NMSEAI affiliates”**
- Those who participated in and/or were impacted by NMSEAI—**Hmong and non-Hmong community members (board members)**

The design of the evaluation is a naturalistic inquiry combined with evaluation participant data collection using mostly qualitative methods (open-ended surveys). Naturalistic inquiry is the close observation and participation by the evaluator in program processes in order to gather and identify how a program operates.

Data gathering from program participants was primarily achieved through e-mailed surveys, in-person interviews and focus groups. Open-ended questionnaires were used to obtain information for all surveys, interviews and focus groups. We collected qualitative data (responses from the open-ended questions) from Southeast Asian participants, the

working group of NMSEAI, and people involved with the program either by their affiliation as a board member or by their participation as a presenter.

We chose board members of the involved neighborhood agencies to describe the impact of NMSEAI on the non-Hmong community. We divided key evaluation participants within the Southeast Asian population by stratifying by generation (youth, middle age, and elderly) and gender. This stratification process represented an attempt to look at different program effects on different sub-constituencies. We conducted focus groups by dividing by gender in order to create a safe space for discussion of the program.

We used the stratified focus group approach for Southeast Asian evaluation participants because there was a concern that within group interaction certain constituencies (especially women, the elderly, or teenagers) might not be able to speak up about their experiences with the program. Although we attempted to conduct focus groups as the sole instrument by which to gather data from Southeast Asian evaluation participants, on two occasions a scheduled focus group turned into an interview.

The difficulty experienced in planning a focus group is indicative of the difficulty NMSEAI has had in organizing among this population. That is, on the two occasions we had planned to have a focus group, there were a number of barriers that prevented Southeast Asian evaluation participants (who had previously agreed on attending) from coming to the meeting. Some of the barriers were culturally specific; other reasons for not coming may be considered more general. Listed below are some of the reasons that Southeast Asian evaluation participants did not come to a scheduled focus group:

- One participant had to send food to the hospital. Hmong people do not traditionally eat hospital food when ill. They prefer home-cooked meals often consisting of certain foods (white rice, boiled chicken, etc.). This is an important cultural obligation the family must fulfill; in this particular circumstance, it had become assigned to the intended focus group participant.
- One participant did not come to the focus group because a teenage child had taken her vehicle. She refused to accept NMSEAI transportation insisting that it was too much trouble to send her back and forth. She preferred instead to wait, indefinitely, for the child to return.
- One participant could not attend the focus group because he had to attend a school function for his child.
- Another person had to attend a neighborhood association board / block club meeting.

Again, these reasons are described because they illustrate difficulties in bringing together participants to engage in civic activity.

Another unanticipated limitation of using focus groups as a method of data collection was self-censorship. Because we had the opportunity to have both a focus group and an interview for two sub-constituencies (men and women), we were able to observe differences in responses based on whether the participants were attending a focus group

or an interview. These different responses may be attributable to the method of data collection (focus group versus personal interview) or they may be random differences. We are inclined to believe that it has more to do with the former rather than the latter, because the Hmong community is so closely knit and politically divisive that it is difficult for community members be honest and direct within the context of a focus group. We hypothesize that participants in focus groups knew one another, which inhibited their responses from being too harsh or too excited, even though candidly provided.

The participation of persons from each of these groups was voluntary. The selection of survey participants was not randomized; thus we cannot generalize from the comments of the informants to the whole of the particular population. Ample effort was made within the time space of six months in which the evaluation was conducted to invite and include all persons either identified as having some impact on or by the program and having expressed interest in contributing to the evaluation report.

The use of naturalistic inquiry combined with the collection of qualitative data minimizes threats to internal validity. Internal validity is the premise that it is optimal for findings from the evaluation study to be replicable. That is, if another evaluator were to conduct this evaluation, he or she would be able to reach similar findings and conclusions, (strengths and weaknesses). Naturalistic inquiry is considered subjective, because it is the participation and observation of the evaluator by which many descriptions and conclusions are made. Thus, in this evaluation, we supplemented our use of naturalistic inquiry with qualitative data from open-ended interviews with NSMEAI working group, NMSEAI affiliates, and Hmong and non-Hmong community members.

It is also optimal to extend the findings and evaluation framework to other, but similar contexts. This extension requires high external validity of the evaluation. External validity is the generalizability of findings of a particular program to other contexts (later period of time for example). The findings here should be considered the culmination of many case studies exemplifying the variety of reactions to and impact of NMSEAI processes. Through the course of this report, these accounts are situated within a detailed record of NMSEAI's history, program description and projects, theory of action and context. Thus, the reader has ample information to make a judgement about how the program outcomes of NMSEAI could be produced elsewhere given certain contextual factors (i.e. level of funding, type of collaboration, etc).

PROGRAM CONTEXT

The context that the NMSEAI operates in is the geographical area of North Minneapolis, specifically the three neighborhoods of Jordan, Cleveland, and Hawthorne. North Minneapolis is a low income, working class region that is a target relocation area for many refugees and immigrants, because of its affordable property prices. The 2000 Census data reveals the following information about the area:

Race:	African-American 56%, White 19%, Asian-Americans 15%, American-Indians 2%, Hispanic or Latino 5%, Other 3%
Of Asian Race:	Asian-Indian 0.2%, Chinese 0.2%, Phillipino 0.0, Japanese 0.0, Korean 0.1%, Vietnamese 0.2%, Other Asian 14.2%
Average Household Size:	3.34 persons
Average Family Size:	4 persons
Housing Occupancy:	Renter-occupied 49%, Owner-occupied 51%
Households with Individuals under 18:	53%

The category "Other Asian" can be considered primarily composed of ethnic Hmong and some Lao. Also important to note is the fact that oftentimes immigrant communities are undercounted, so estimates reported here may be understated.

THE PROGRAM IN DETAIL

History

The North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative is a collaboration resulting from numerous individual community organizers coming together in 1998 to address the rising need they saw and experienced in the North Minneapolis area. An increasing number of Hmong had moved into North Minneapolis neighborhoods because they were financially able to purchase homes and the houses in the area were highly affordable. For North Minneapolis (being a highly diverse area in terms of race, ethnicity, language, and age) this influx of culturally different people was not an unprecedented event. The organizers faced a situation all too common with changing populations: minority persons and families marginalized by institutions unwilling or unable to accommodate the changing face of their constituency.

Furthermore, the increasing physical visibility and social invisibility of the Hmong in the neighborhoods encouraged racial hostility and misunderstanding among people who had already been residing in the area. For Terry Wilson, one of the founders of NMSEAI, one of the primary reasons that NMSEAI was developed was to bridge that racial hostility he saw happening between African-Americans and the new Hmong residents. Wilson specifically recalls,

"Blacks would see the Asians getting a house or a nice new car and not know that it was because of the entire families coming together to pool money for it...there was a rumor that the government was giving them this money and Blacks were jealous and angry."

Personal experiences for each of the collaborators were driving forces for establishing the effort of NMSEAI. For both Char Perry and Sue Nelson, it was a matter of seeing the cultural shock that Hmong neighbors were experiencing especially between Hmong parents and children. Nelson's inability to communicate her willingness to help her Hmong neighbors was a frustrating motivator for participating in NSMEAI. Sue Nelson remembers early on when a Hmong family living on her block had been extremely troubled and she recalls her desire to help them. "I wanted them to know that I welcomed them and was looking out for their kids. Not that I didn't like them."

For Char Perry, organizing in the Jordan neighborhood, it was hard to understand her Hmong neighbors' lack of involvement with the community especially with housing issues. She understood that the resources were out there for the Hmong to utilize, yet knew that JACC had been unsuccessful in their outreach effort.

"We had tried getting some information translated into Hmong for newsletters and people had tried doing some outreach before. Hawthorne had done a survey and identified that there were a lot of Southeast Asians living in the community...you can't do anything unless you get to know your neighbors and the only way to do that is get out there and meet them...When you do go door knocking you might talk to someone who is Southeast Asian and speaks English and they may say they will come but then they do not come and that was the frustration—I talked to that person and they said they were coming and they didn't and so now what do we do? And so trying to figure out, knowing that those things didn't work, I felt that was a valuable piece going into it (NMSEAI). The traditional things we had done didn't work."

Mainstream methods of community organizing revolve around newsletters, door knocking, and community events. The neighborhood organizations had attempted these traditional tactics to inform and attract Hmong residents. It was unsuccessful though, as one of the major barriers was language. The majority of adult Hmong who moved into North Minneapolis had limited or no English language skills.

Cha Lee, Executive Director at the Southeast Asian Community Council (SEACC) had lived in Minneapolis for some time. He was frustrated by the fact that available resources in the area for home improvement or community building were not reaching Hmong people because of language barriers. His agency alone could not handle the level of need created by institutional disregard for Southeast Asians and their families.

When the City of Minneapolis unveiled the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) in 1991, all of the organizers knew that here was an opportunity for Hmong residents to get the support they needed. The very concept of NRP stipulated the inclusion of residents in the process of developing and sustaining communities. With the NRP helping to set the context for their work, the organizers were even more spurred to begin developing NMSEAI.

On their own, they could not have accomplished as much for themselves, their agencies, or for the Hmong residents. A free-forming process evolved whereby each volunteer used their personality and skills to encourage and reinforce the contributions of the other, and eventually, Terry, Sue, and Char from the neighborhood organizations combined their expertise in neighborhood organizing with Cha's knowledge of the Hmong people and culture. Strategies were developed to tackle the issues they collectively owned as their responsibility to help solve. Innovation and flexibility were key principles in all of the group's brainstorming. The task before them was overwhelming: how to get mainstream institutions to respond to the needs and wants of an emerging, marginalized, refugee community in low-income, working class, diverse neighborhoods; and furthermore, how to influence Hmong community members to seek out and utilize available resources.

With the aid of Jay Clark (Director of the Minneapolis Training Program For Community Organizers) from the University of Minnesota and a staff member from the Cleveland Neighborhood Association, a grant proposal was put together for NMSEAI. If the project was to actualize its own independence, funding had to be found to support the voluntary efforts of Cha, Sue, Terry, and Char and their respective agencies. Once the funding was acquired, the founding group was able to hire a Hmong community organizer. He became responsible for coordinating the forums, conducting outreach to attract participants, getting feedback from all stakeholders about forum productivity, and in general helping individual Southeast Asian constituents with the problems they had in the neighborhoods.

PROGRAM THEORY OF ACTION

Because of the large settlement of Hmong within the Twin Cities Metropolitan area, many Hmong associate with the cultural community much more readily than with any geographically circumscribed community. Political factional affiliations and networks still play a major role in galvanizing support from Hmong constituents. Furthermore, once Hmong constituents have assigned their loyalty to a particular leader or program, they usually expect the leader or program to provide the necessary resources or services. This type of activism (leader-follower; provider-receiver) does not mesh with mainstream definitions of political activism, where the individual or the group brings about change because they themselves are defining and demanding it rather than going through a liaison leadership.

The North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative has been working through traditional Hmong methods while at the same time is often confronted with the limitations of differing paradigms of community involvement and activism.

The North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative is predicated on the idea of grassroots organizing to achieve social change. That is, in order for institutions to change, constituents must be the driving force in demanding and envisioning that change. With this particular population, the working group knew from their own outreach efforts that the ability of Southeast Asians to organize effectively would be severely compromised by a language barrier as well as a cultural shock in differing definitions around civic engagement and leadership. Furthermore, institutions have lacked the necessary will

and/or knowledge about the Hmong constituency to overcome this barrier and provide access to resources. Thus, the working group wanted to facilitate knowledge gathering between both parties.

Once Southeast Asian residents have attended a forum or met with the community organizer they are provided useful information about available resources (i.e. police, animal control, advocates, legal system, etc.). Their attendance will empower them, not only because of the provision of helpful information, but because they will witness the sense of community which will spur them to recognize collective agency. Furthermore, their visibility to presenters (i.e. police, animal control, advocates, lawyers and judges, etc.) heightens awareness about the issues and problems that the population faces and what institutional responses are lacking in meeting those needs.

The ultimate goal is a community that no longer needs the Initiative because they are no longer alienated from their neighborhood and the institutions that are there to serve them.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND PROJECTS

The program then set about formulating topics for forum presentations by conducting a survey of local Southeast Asians residents to ask them about the needs and issues of living in North Minneapolis that they wanted addressed. The working group then prioritized the findings into four broad categories: education, home improvement, crime and safety and economic development. The working group identified the necessary institutions and community resources that could provide the information at forums and seminars.

Southeast Asian residents were then invited to attend forums and meetings to get information and ask questions about the particular topic. Very often the community organizer went personally to their home to assist them with particular issues and afterwards when that one-to-one relationship had been established, forum invitations were extended and readily accepted. Other forms of attracting Hmong to the forums include telephone calling and radio announcements by the community organizer.

The monthly seminars typically began with dinner at tables of 8 to 10 people, including Southeast Asians, non-Asian residents, agency staff and public officials. Each presenter spoke about the topic of the evening, followed by questions and comments from the Southeast Asian participants.

Breaking into smaller groups during the forum meetings also allowed for further interaction and problem definition. Interpreting services were provided along with transportation and childcare. Meals were served at each one of the forum presentations. Participants were asked to sign in so that NMSEAI could keep track of attendance.

Recently NMSEAI had a celebration to honor the participation of Southeast Asian residents and forum presenters. Other projects developing out of NMSEAI currently include an emergency language interpretation card to be used by non-English speaking

Southeast Asian residents when they are stopped by police for such routine things as traffic violations. Also, based on last year's success, another community garden is being planned for summer 2002 to be used primarily by elderly Hmong residents, but is open for all to enjoy and participate in. During the summer of 2001, NMSEAI worked in collaboration with Sustainable Resources Center to locate, prepare, organize and implement a community garden targeted to Hmong residents in the Hawthorne Neighborhood.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Project Strengths:

- *NMSEAI is a vehicle for the visibility and voice of Southeast Asian residents.* Many residents and presenters reported that NMSEAI served as a resource for them to receive cross-cultural understanding. Raised awareness was one general effect cited among board members/non-Hmong residents. NMSEAI was often attributed as being very important in promoting the visibility of Southeast Asian residents. The following excerpts demonstrate the general conclusion that one of NMSEAI's strengths are those qualities of visibility and voice:

"(If NMSEAI were not active)... S.E. Asian residents would have a difficult time locating resources and knowing where to get information about the legal system. With an organizing body, it is easy to reach many people at one time and leverage limited staff time and resources. This forum also provides the opportunity for collaboration and discussion of common needs and benefits of working together." *Forum Presenter*

"I see the strength as obviously being the opportunity to meet and do that. The meal is there to be shared, and that can be an icebreaker. I think that if there wasn't a vehicle or forum for the Southeast Asians to ask their questions, there might be more police work, there might be more calls, less understanding of the process. I was very impressed." *Forum Presenter*

Among NMSEAI participants who were under 18, it was commonly agreed upon that without NMSEAI it would be very difficult for the Hmong to network and make their demands heard among the mainstream population. They believed that in order for the Hmong community to be acknowledged in North Minneapolis, they had to become "louder" and "made bigger", in other words, get attention. NMSEAI is helping them to do that.

- *NMSEAI has facilitated opportunities for Southeast Asians to participate within the traditional neighborhood groups.* Recently Hmong residents have begun joining the boards of the collaborating neighborhood agencies. This is what one of those new board members had to say in response to whether or not NMSEAI had helped him form partnerships with non-Hmong residents:

"Yes, it's very helpful, because I am now a board [member] on JACC, because of Tom's (the community organizer) work. He told me that there were no Hmong board members and because he knew me he asked and it's due to his program. Whenever there was a problem in my neighborhood and I called the neighborhood group they would refer me to Tom."
Participant

- *NMSEAI has improved channels of communication between Southeast Asian residents and institutions.* The majority of NMSEAI participants believed that they were able to work through their issues because of the one-to-one assistance provided. One woman talked about the problems she encountered with accessing the right institutional personnel to address issues she was experiencing with her children.

"There are many activities because you don't know language you have many difficulties. One time the school sent me to St. Paul to someplace on University Avenue and they said that place would help me. When I called and went there they just told me that my children were my responsibilities and that I needed to talk to them. It just didn't work. So when over and over it didn't work, I finally came and joined with the Initiative and talked with Cha. Cha referred me to Tom who was able to refer me to the right social workers so that I could work with them and see improvement." *Forum Participant*

One presenter spoke about her improved ability to serve Southeast Asians because of improved communication channels.

"My personal relationship has gone from virtually no relations to having numerous contacts within the community. As I mentioned, SE Asians are going to be a larger and larger population of Northside homeowners. By networking, we can help them with their kids and other "system" issues. On a personal level, I approach and converse with SE Asians on a different level. I understand their confusion better, and I probably go to greater lengths to help them. I also feel confident that I can make a call, and have a SE Asian community member assist me quickly – if not immediately." *Forum Presenter*

- *NMSEAI has educated contributing presenters on Southeast Asians and their needs.* Various presenters indicated that they did not understand the serious issues Southeast Asians were facing even though they were aware of some issues such as limited English speaking ability. One presenter explained,

"I didn't know the tremendous problems that they had with dogs,

or the lack of knowledge that they should call animal control. The seemingly lack of ability to know that that is the only place to call. I now have a much better appreciation of the language barrier."

Forum Presentor

Another presenter believed that if NMSEAI was not active, she would still be "in the dark" about the complex problems Southeast Asians had.

- *NMSEAI has provided immediate attention to Southeast Asian families in distress.* Very often Hmong living in North Minneapolis are targets of crime ranging from incidental occurrences such as eggings to more serious offenses such as muggings and vandalism. All participants identified some manner in which NMSEAI was able to help them deal with problems they or their family were experiencing. One participant went even so far as to say that if NMSEAI were not active, more Hmong in the Northside would be committing suicide from all the stress they experienced.
- *NMSEAI has provided relevant, useful information to Southeast Asian families.* All participants thought that the information received at forums and meetings and through one-to-one relationships with the community organizer were very relevant and beneficial to their lives. Learning about the process for filing complaints (i.e. crime reports, interaction with school authorities, etc.) and accessing resources were the two most often cited reasons for utilizing the information provided by NMSEAI.

Project Weaknesses:

- *Limited affect on policy changes.* Although many presenters were personally affected by their participation in NMSEAI in that their understanding, attitudes, and individual behavior were changed, the effect on policy and procedures has been embryonic. As NMSEAI matures and the activism of the population finds root, designing policy implications may become the next task of NMSEAI.
- *Limited collaboration with presenters.* Presenters come from other agencies whether they are other non-profits or public agencies. They usually come by invitation and may not necessarily have the authority to enter into deeper collaborative endeavor with NMSEAI. However, many presenters wanted to remain in contact with NMSEAI but felt there lacked room for them to volunteer their efforts or that they did not receive proper follow-up and updates.
- *Limited participation of non-Hmong community members.* Community members that we did interview were current and former board members, the most likely group of non-Hmong community members to access NMSEAI information and activities. Those that had more participation with NMSEAI or any other activities involving the Southeast Asian population were better able to identify the possible effects and importance of the program. Although the process was open, the overwhelming majority of non-Hmong community members did not participate actively and continuously in the planning process or events of NMSEAI. Their lack of

participation inhibits the effectiveness of NMSEAI in creating partnerships and increasing the overall sense of community.

- *Lack of gender and race analysis in strategizing outreach efforts.* The working group did not undergo a gender and race analysis in developing NMSEAI goals and methods. Unfortunately, the effect of not explicitly examining the effects of racism and sexism (especially within the Hmong community) has been that issues, such as domestic violence, were not well received or as beneficial as expected. The lack of race analysis in particular has contributed to the lack of progress NMSEAI has made with regard to fostering feelings of community. Many Hmong participants identified the problems they experienced within the neighborhoods as stemming from African-Americans. For example, among Hmong youth (NMSEAI participants), feelings of being unsafe were attributed to African-Americans loitering and incidences of intimidation. Because very few non-Whites and even fewer non-Hmong have thus far utilized the opportunities offered and facilitated through NMSEAI for community partnership, it is foreseeable that NMSEAI will not ameliorate racial tension, especially between African-Americans and Hmong residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the strengths/weaknesses analysis the following recommendations are given to the working group:

- *Clarify expectations of and from forum presenters.* For example, NMSEAI should ask forum presenters to what extent they would be able to contribute. Do they only want to exchange information or would they have a liaison person who could attend meetings or receive updates on a regular basis? What is the organization's agenda in collaborating? What can NMSEAI do and not do to help them meet their agenda?
- *Maintain consistent communication with all forum presenters post-forum.* NMSEAI should ensure that their activities remain accessible and visible to presenters, because visibility is a major criterion for success in promoting the presence of Southeast Asian residents and their needs.
- *Identify neighborhoods, neighborhood groups, and the difference between SEACC and NMSEAI.* In order for Hmong residents to start having neighborhood affiliation and not only ethnic community affiliation, NMSEAI should delineate neighborhoods by providing some history on how neighborhoods were shaped and pointing out geographic boundaries.
- *Undergo a gender and race analysis with every decision made about topics for forums, forum presentations, and developing projects.* NMSEAI should define what possible gender and race components exist for any particular topic. For example, NMSEAI should ask itself how could this project benefit men versus women, Hmong versus non-Hmong? How can we ensure that women and men, Hmong and non-Hmong receive similar benefits from a project? Was there any particular sub-constituency dominating or absent from the discussion at the forum meeting? How

might sub-constituencies define the problem differently? What tactics (forums, garden, one-to-one communication, etc.) work best with what groups?

- *Extend the frequency of meetings with Southeast Asian residents by increasing the variety of activity.* NMSEAI should target sub-constituencies (teenagers, girls, boys, elderly, etc.) so that meetings and projects are smaller, have a more uniform audience, and are more manageable. By involving and organizing by sub-constituency, NMSEAI will provide a better experience for participants to consume knowledge and feel a deeper association with NMSEAI.
- *Create opportunities for the Hmong and non-Hmong to interact in a comfortable, mutually satisfying, variety of ways.* Brainstorm about different activities that will engage non-Hmong and Hmong. Examples: workshops on cooking, recipe exchange, household repair, exterior maintenance, litter collection (for kids), gardening herbs, gardening greens, social events, cultural exchange.
- *Create and maintain a library of resources for Southeast Asians to easily access information for procedures that are considered routine so that it minimizes the replication of that information by the community organizer.* For example, create a video or audiocassette explaining common procedures for handling dog bites, traffic stops, parent teacher meetings, etc.
- *Communicate more with the Hmong constituency about the mission of NMSEAI, what NMSEAI is capable and not capable of doing, and what is the purpose and methods of NMSEAI.* For example, NMSEAI should let participants know that forums are not meant to resolve individual problems, but rather to introduce the systems and procedures that are in place to deal with those needs. Furthermore, the forums are an opportunity for constituents to voice concerns and *begin* the process of participation.

Appendix 1

Background of Hmong NMSEAI participants interviewed (total: 11)

	Male	Female	Total
18 and under	2	2	4
19 and up	4	3	7
Single	3	2	5
Married	3	2	5
Divorced	0	1	1
English speaking	2	2	4
Limited English	4	3	7
Knew neighborhood	1	1	2
Did not know neighborhood	5	4	9
Parent	4	3	7
Non-parent	2	2	4
Household size <4	0	0	0
Household size 4-7	4	1	5
Household size 8+	2	4	6
Lived in N. Mpls <2 years	1	0	1
Lived in N. Mpls. 2-5 years	2	0	2
Lived in N. Mpls. 5-9 years	2	1	3
Lived in N. Mpls. 10+years	1	4	5
Lived in U.S. <2 years	0	0	0
Lived in U.S. 2-5 years	0	0	0
Lived in U.S. 5-9 years	0	0	0
Lived in U.S. 10+years	6	5	11
Works outside home	4	2	6
Does not work outside home	2	3	5

Appendix 2

QUESTIONS (to Hmong NMSEAI participants)

1. How would you describe NMSEAI to someone who had not heard of it before?
2. Has the information presented by the speakers been informative?
3. Do you feel that those people who came to present information with the Hmong now have a better understanding of us?
4. Has NMSEAI helped you to act in partnerships with non-Hmong?
5. Has NMSEAI helped you to know the Jordan, Cleveland and Hawthorne neighborhoods? (Please identify if known the neighborhood group or liaison)
6. Do you understand the way neighborhood group/council works?
7. What is your understanding of the role of SEACC?
8. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood? Why or why not?
9. What is your perception of police-community relationships after NMSEAI (no opinion, no change, much better, somewhat better, somewhat worse, much worse)?
10. What could be changed/further provided by NMSEAI to increase your participation in neighborhood activities?
11. What do you like/appreciate about NMSEAI?
12. What would you like to see NMSEAI do in the future for the community?
13. What would like Americans to know about the Hmong?
14. What do you think would occur if NMSEAI were not active?

Appendix 3

Background questionnaire administered individually to Hmong informants in focus groups

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
Female Male
3. What is your marital status?
Single Married Widowed Divorced/Separated
4. Do you have children?
No Yes
5. If yes, what are the ages?
6. How many people live in your household?
Less than 4 people 4-7 people 8 people or more
7. What neighborhood do you live in?
Hawthorne Cleveland Jordan Don't know
8. How long have you lived in north Minneapolis?
Less than 2 years 2-5 Years 5-8 years 10 years or more /native
9. How long have you lived in the United States?
Less than 2 years 2-5 Years 5-8 years 10 years or more/ native
10. Do you work outside the home?
No Yes
11. If yes, how far from home do you work? (What is the distance/time it takes you to get to work?)
Less than 15 minutes 15-30 minutes 30 minutes or more
12. How did you hear about the North Minneapolis Southeast Asian Initiative?

	Yes	No	Don't remember
Tom Yang			
Family Member			
Neighbor			
Terry Wilson			
Sue Nelson			
Char Perry			
Stephanie Haddad			
Cha Lee			
Neighborhood organization board member, block club leader, or staff.			
Flyer			
Radio			
School			
Workplace			

Appendix 4

QUESTIONS (to board members/non-Hmong community members)

- 1) What has been your role or participation thus far in the project?
- 2) In your view what is the purpose of this project?
- 3) How do you see NMSEAI affecting the communities of Jordan, Cleveland, and Hawthorne at large (Please give examples if possible)?
- 4) How much progress would you say NMSEAI has had educating institutions and organizations (such as your own) about the special needs of Southeast Asian families? (Please give examples if possible)
- 5) What are the differences in organizing / working with Southeast Asian residents versus the traditional populations?
- 6) How has this project helped your organization? How else could this project help your organization? (Has it raised awareness, provided education, facilitated service provision, etc?)
- 7) How has this project affected your relationship with Southeast Asian community members? (Do you feel better able to approach them, address their needs, understand them, etc?)
- 8) What other activities have helped you learn more about the Southeast Asian population? (For example, social events, educational pieces, internet information, etc.?)
- 9) What do you think would occur if NMSEAI was not active? (For yourself and/or for the Southeast Asian residents?)
- 10) What are the strengths and weaknesses of this project?
- 11) What else would you like to comment on about NMSEAI?

Appendix 5

QUESTIONS (to affiliates/forum presenters)

- 1) What has been your role or participation thus far in the project?
- 2) In your view what is the purpose of this project?
- 3) How do you see NMSEAI affecting Southeast Asian families? (Please give examples if possible)
- 4) How much progress would you say NMSEAI has had educating institutions and organizations (such as your own) about the special needs of Southeast Asian families? (Please give examples if possible)
- 5) What are the differences in working with the Southeast Asian population versus with traditional populations?
- 6) How has this project helped your agency/organization? How else could this project help your organization/organization? (Has it raised awareness, provided education, facilitated services provision, etc?)
- 7) How has this project affected your relationship with Southeast Asian community members? (Do you feel you are better able to approach them, address their needs, understand them, etc?)
- 8) What other activities have helped or would help you learn more about the Southeast Asian population? (For example social activities, educational pieces, internet information, etc.)
- 9) What do you think would occur if NMSEAI was not active? (For the Southeast Asian residents and for yourself/your organization)
- 10) What are the strengths and weaknesses of this project?
- 11) What else would you like to comment on about the NMSEAI?

Appendix 6

QUESTIONS (to the "Working Group")

1. Describe how you/your organization became involved with NMSEAI? What has been your role or participation thus far in the project?
2. What are the goals of NMSEAI as you see it?
3. Who are the partners in NMSEAI? Do they know what you do? How would you describe your relationship with them?
4. Do you feel you have the necessary resources and support from the other partners in order for you to do your job?
5. Do you feel you are better able to do your work because you are working in a collaborative environment?
6. Do you feel that participating in NMSEAI is of value to you or your organization?
7. How involved do you feel in NMSEAI as an entity?
8. Describe to me how NMSEAI works?
9. Does a shared culture exist at MSEAI? How do you see the presence or absence of this impact on the operations and effect of NMSEAI?
10. Do you feel that your understanding of the Hmong community is enhanced by working with NMSEAI?
11. What is the likelihood of your organization sharing operational costs of NMSEAI?
12. What is the likelihood of your organization sharing/volunteering staff, people, human?
13. Based on your experiences with NMSEAI, what do you see as the necessary characteristics for effective collaboration? If you could improve one thing at NMSEAI to make it more collaborative, what would it be?
14. How do you see NMSEAI affecting Southeast Asian families? (Please give examples)
15. How do you see NMSEAI affecting the communities of Jordan, Cleveland, and Hawthorne at large?
16. How much progress would you say NMSEAI has had educating institutions and organizations about the special needs of Southeast Asian families? (Please give examples)
17. What are the differences in organizing among Southeast Asian residents versus within traditional populations?
18. How has this project affected your relationship with Southeast Asian community members?
19. What other activities have helped you live with the Southeast Asian community members?
20. What do you think would occur if NMSEAI was not active?
21. What are the strengths and the weaknesses of NMSEAI?
22. What else would you like to comment on about the NMSEAI?